National Literacy Mission (NLM) aims at imparting functional literacy to non-literates in 15-35 year age group. Major thrust of this programme is on promotion of literacy among women, members belonging to SCs and STs.

(b) As per Census 2001, female literacy has increased by 14.87 percentage points *i.e.* from 39.29% in 1991 to 54.16% in 2001. The gap in male-female literacy has decreased from 24.84 percentage points in 1991 to 21.69 percentage points in 2001.

Implementation of noon meal scheme by Tamil Nadu

3196. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of implementation of nutritious noon meal scheme by the Government of Tamil Nadu, for the last two decades;

(b) whether Central Government would provide financial assistance for this scheme, which is implemented in several States of the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) Yes, Sir. Tamil Nadu is providing cooked meal to the students of primary classes under the National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-day Meal Scheme).

(b) and (c) The Central Government is alredy providing foodgrains, free of cost, to the State implementing agencies and also reimbursing admissible transportation charges based on which they are expected to provide meals to the children. There is no proposal at present to provide additional funds to States/UTs.

Culture and values in education

3197. SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether two-thirds of the BE of the scheme to strengthen culture and values in education remained unutilized during the last two years;